



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
Public Health

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Director and Health Officer

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Environmental Health
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MOBILE FOOD FACILITY INFORMATION PACKET

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

These guidelines have been established to assist in the permitting process for a mobile food facility. The following requirements are extracted from the California Health & Safety Code, California Retail Food Code (Cal Code).

A Mobile Food Facility is any vehicle used in conjunction with a commissary or other permanent food facility upon which food is sold or distributed at retail. Mobile Food Facility does not include a transporter used to transport packaged food from a food facility, or other approved source to the consumer.

A Mobile Support Unit is a vehicle, used in conjunction with a commissary that travels to, and services, mobile food facilities as needed to replenish supplies, including food and potable water, clean the interior of the unit, or dispose of liquid or solid wastes.

A. **ADMINISTRATIVE**

1. **PERMITS**

All vehicles shall have a valid Los Angeles County Public Health Permit in order to operate legally in Los Angeles County. The permit shall note the specific vehicle license plate number and the name of the current registered owner of the mobile food facility. A valid DMV registration, if applicable, and a valid identification are required to obtain a public health permit. The health permit shall be posted or otherwise maintained within the vehicle at all times.

2. COMMISSARY

All mobile food facilities shall operate from a commissary, a mobile support unit, or other approved facility. A commissary is a food facility that services mobile food facilities, and mobile support units; where food, containers, or supplies are stored; food is prepared or prepackaged for sale or service at other locations; utensils are cleaned; liquid and solid wastes are disposed of; and potable water is obtained. See Commissary Lists for Mobile Food Facilities. A restaurant or market may also act as a commissary when approved by this agency. STORAGE OF THE MOBILE FOOD FACILITY OR ANY TYPE OF FOOD PRODUCT AT HOME IS NOT APPROVED.

Owners of mobile food facilities shall provide a written statement signed by the commissary owner stating that the cart will be housed and serviced at that location. A copy of the Verification of Proper Food Vehicle Storage is included in this document. This Department conducts random inspections for verification of commissary use. A permit shall not be issued, until the commissary location is verified and approved by this Department.

3. MINIMUM STANDARDS OF KNOWLEDGE IN FOOD SAFETY

All food employees shall have adequate knowledge of, and shall be properly trained in, food safety as it relates to their assigned duties. Food facilities that prepare, handle, or serve nonprepackaged potentially hazardous food, shall have an owner or employee who has successfully passed as approved and accredited food safety certification examination. The certification is valid for five years from the issue date. There shall be at least one food safety certified owner or employee at each food facility. No certified person at a food facility may serve at any other food facility as the person required to the food safety certification. A food facility that commences operation, changes ownership, or no longer has a certified owner or employee pursuant to this section shall have 60 days to comply.

4. WRITTEN OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

The permit holder of a mobile food facility handling nonprepackaged food shall develop and follow written operational procedures for food handling and the cleaning and sanitizing of food contact surfaces and utensils. The enforcement agency shall review and approve the procedures prior to implementation and an approved copy shall be kept on the mobile food facility during periods of operation. See Written Operational Procedures.

5. BUSINESS LICENSES

Owners shall obtain the necessary business permits from the local City Hall or County Business License office prior to operating. Local cities may have restrictions regarding sales from vehicles. All vehicles are to display a current Public Health Permit and a current certification decal.

6. IDENTIFICATION

The business name or name of the operator, city, state, zip code and the name of the permittee, if different from the name of the food facility, shall be legible, clearly visible to patrons, and permanently affixed on the customer side of the mobile food facility and mobile support unit. The name shall be in letters at least three inches high and shall be of a color contrasting with the vehicle exterior. Letters and numbers for the city, state, and zip code shall not be less than one inch high. Motorized mobile food facilities and mobile support units shall have the required identification on two sides.

7. TOILET FACILITIES

Mobile food facilities shall be operated within 200 feet travel distance of approved and readily available toilet and hand washing facilities or as otherwise approved by the enforcement agency, to ensure restroom facilities are available to facility employees whenever the mobile food facility is stopped to conduct business for more than a one hour period. Written documentation must be provided to the Vehicle Inspection Program indicating permission for the food handlers to use these toilet facilities. A copy of the letter shall be maintained inside the vehicle at all times during operation.

8. CERTIFICATION INSPECTION

Each mobile food facility is required to be certified by the Vehicle Inspection Program once a year. After passing an inspection conducted at the commissary, the mobile food facility will be issued a Certification Decal/Sticker.

B. GENERAL OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MOBILE FOOD FACILITITES

1. All food handlers shall wash their hands with soap & water before beginning to handle or prepare food, and also after visiting the toilet.
2. All food handlers/operators shall wear clean outer garments and keep their persons clean at all times while engaged in handling food, utensils, or food contact equipment. Gloves shall be worn if the employee has any cuts, sores, rashes, artificial nails, nail polish, and rings. All food handlers shall wear approved hair restraints (i.e. hairnet, cap). The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited within the food preparation area.
3. Hot and cold running water shall be supplied to the handwashing sink and the warewashing sink. The minimum water temperature for mobile food facilities conducting warewashing is 120°F. For mobile food facilities utilizing a hand washing sink only, a minimum of 100°F is required.

4. All potentially hazardous foods shall be maintained at or above 135°F or below 41°F. An accurate thermometer shall be provided to facilitate the checking of food temperatures. Potentially hazardous foods held at 135°F shall be destroyed at the end of the operating day.
5. All food shall be manufactured, produced, prepared, compounded, packed, stored, transported, kept for sale, and served so as to be pure and free from adulteration and spoilage; shall have been obtained from an approved source; and shall be protected from dirt, vermin, unnecessary handling, droplet contamination, and overhead leakage. Condiments shall be prepackaged or placed in approved dispensing devices.
6. All perishable pre-packaged food that is prepared on the vehicle and made available for self-service, shall be marked with the date that the food is being offered for sale, "Day Prepared For". All perishable prepackaged foods shall be marked "Perishable, Keep Refrigerated."
7. No foods which are required to be wrapped and dated shall be rewrapped, used, sold, or given away, after the "Day Prepared For" which is inscribed on the container or package. The "Day Prepared For" marking shall not be removed or obliterated. All prepackaged food shall be properly labeled in English. Invoices shall be presented upon request, i.e. tamales, Gulf oysters.
8. Ice used for cooling is not for human consumption.
9. Single-service utensils such as forks, spoons, napkins, straws, etc., shall be stored in a manner that protects them from contamination, e.g. forks and spoons shall have only the handles exposed.
10. All food contact surfaces and storage areas, shall be cleaned daily. All food facilities in which food is prepared or in which multi-service utensils and equipment are used shall provide manual methods to effectively clean and sanitize utensils as specified in Section 114099.
11. All potable water tanks and waste water tanks shall be thoroughly flushed and sanitized during the servicing operation.
12. Cleaning supplies and wiping cloths shall be stored in an area away from all food and food equipment.
13. An adequate number of easily cleanable containers for refuse disposal shall be provided. All refuse shall be removed and disposed of in a sanitary manner as frequently as may be necessary to prevent the creation of a nuisance.
14. Any discharge of wastewater onto the surface of the ground is strictly prohibited. Waste tank outlets shall be maintained closed or tightly capped and shall be maintained in good repair. All wastewater generated by the vehicle shall be disposed of at an approved commissary or at other approved facility.

C. FULL FOOD PREPARATION

1. Full food preparation shall be conducted in a fully enclosed mobile food facility.
2. All food in the warming oven and steam table shall be held at 135°F, or above at all times. An accurate oven thermometer shall be placed in the warming oven and a probe thermometer shall be placed in the steam table to facilitate the checking of the food temperature.
3. Thawing of foods shall be conducted by an approved method only.
4. All areas of the vehicle where unpackaged food or beverages are displayed for sale shall have tight fitting doors which, when closed, completely enclose the food compartments and shall be maintained clean.
5. All windows, door and other openings shall be in good repair and provided with screens or flaps to prevent the entrance of flies. Pass through windows shall be covered when not in use. Self-closing screens are required to be attached to the exterior of all pass through openings.
6. The door to the food preparation area shall be self-closing and shall be maintained closed.
7. Aisle space shall be unobstructed at all times. Foods and food supplies shall be maintained off of the floor.
8. Food, food supplies or personal items shall not be stored in the sinks. Personal items shall not be stored in food compartment of the vehicle.
9. Mobile Food Facilities serving raw oysters shall comply with requirements outlined in the Health Advisory Bulletin.

D. LIMITED FOOD PREPARATION

1. Limited food preparation may be conducted in an unenclosed mobile food facility or a fully enclosed mobile food facility.
2. All potentially hazardous food shall be cooked to order. Hot holding of potentially hazardous food for later use is not approved.
3. All raw ingredients shall be peeled, sliced and prepared in advance, at the commissary.
4. Food handling shall be conducted within the approved food compartment.
5. Utensils shall be washed, rinsed, and sanitized in an approved manner depending on the food operation.
6. Warewashing shall be performed within the enclosure affixed to the 3-compartment sink.

E. PREPACKAGED FOOD

1. All food items i.e. candy shall be from an approved source. Do not sell Lead tainted candy.
2. Peeling or slicing of fruits shall only be conducted at the commissary or other approved facility.
3. Scooping, i.e. ice cream, icees, ice, shall only be conducted in an approved mobile food facility.
4. Prepackaged food shall not be stored in direct contact with ice or water if the food is subject to the entry of water because of the nature of its packaging, wrapping, container, or its positioning in the ice or water.
5. Mobile food facilities approved for the sale of produce and prepackaged food shall not store or sell potentially hazardous food unless an approved refrigeration system is installed. (Plan submittal required)

F. MOBILE SUPPORT UNIT (MSU)

1. When used in conjunction with an off site commissary, the mobile support unit shall be equipped with approved equipment to maintain food at the required temperatures.
2. Hoses for potable water transfer shall not come into contact with the floor or the ground.
3. All storage compartments on a MSU used in conjunction with an off-site commissary, shall be permanently affixed to the MSU. The food compartments shall be properly labeled and not used for storage of cleaning supplies, soiled rags, etc.
4. The MSU shall be used per the approved plan. For example, MSU's without a sink cannot service mobile food facilities without sinks.



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HEALTH CODE VIOLATIONS-ENFORCEMENT POLICY

This is to inform you of our current enforcement policy concerning health code violations observed on Mobile Food Facilities.

When the following violations are observed, the Public Health Permit (PHP) may be subject to suspension, or revocation and the inspection may be immediately referred to the City or District Attorney for prosecution:

- Food preparation that is beyond the scope of the operation
- Lack of hot and/or cold running water
- Improper food temperatures
- Unpackaged foods offered for customer self-service, including pastries and food within a self-service warming oven
- Lack of proper dating on potentially hazardous foods offered for customer self-service
- Unlabeled or misbranded prepackaged foods offered for customer self-service
- Gross unsanitary conditions, including vermin infestations (flies, cockroaches, mice, etc.).
- Sale of home prepared foods or foods from an unapproved source
- Discharge of wastewater onto the ground
- Operating without a valid Public Health Permit
- Inadequate mechanical refrigeration
- Lack of oyster tags and warning signs
- Repeated violations
- Interference in the performance of the duty of the Enforcement Officer
- Inability to warewash

When other types of violations are observed, a certain amount of time (noted on the inspection report) will be allowed for the violations to be corrected. If the corrections are not made within that time period, the Public Health Permit may be subject to suspension or revocation and the inspection may then be referred to the City or District Attorney for prosecution.

The owner, manager, or operator of any food facility is responsible for any violation by an employee of any provision of this part or any regulation adopted pursuant to this part. Each day the violation occurs shall be a separate and distinct offense. Except as otherwise stated, any person who violates any part of these regulations shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine or imprisonment or by both fine and imprisonment.

If you have any questions, contact the Vehicle Inspection Program at (626) 430-5500.



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LABELING REQUIREMENTS FOR FOOD PREPARED ON MOBILE FOOD FACILITEIS

The California Health & Safety Code requires that unpackaged food shall not be displayed for self-service on a Mobile Food Facility. Food prepared on a Mobile Food Facility and offered for self-service to the public, shall be wrapped or packaged to protect the food from contamination and shall be labeled as required in the Health & Safety Code (commencing with Section 109875), Sherman Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Law.

The current requirements for packaged foods, available for self-service are:

- The name and place of business of the manufacturer, packer, or distributor
- An accurate statement of the quantity of the contents in terms of weight, measure, or numerical count
- The common or usual name of the food in English
- An ingredient statement listing the common or usual name of each ingredient in descending order of predominance if the food is fabricated from two or more ingredients

All prepackaged food offered for sale from a place other than where it was manufactured shall comply with all the existing labeling requirements of the California Health & Safety Code as well as those of the Los Angeles County Code, Title 11, Section 11.12.330. Violations involving the sale of improperly labeled or unlabeled packaged food offered for self-service from a Mobile Food Facility shall be referred to the City or District Attorney for prosecution.

If you have any questions, contact the Vehicle Inspection Program at (626) 430-5500.